

FROM THE Mayor's Desk



For weeks Government modelling has indicated a huge surge in Covid numbers and it seems that is finally upon us. Council, like virtually all organisations, now moves into a change in the way that we do business, working remotely where possible and reducing face to face interactions. This is to protect both the public and staff. The advice around this is posted on our Council website. Council, largely through the Zoom portal, will continue to operate with both meetings and workshops.

Having just bedded down the Long Term Plan, we start reviewing it under the Annual Plan. In some years that review is just a formal adoption of Year 2 of the LTP directions. That may well be the case but Covid has changed things - we need to understand and review our budgets and workload. The cost of capital works has increased dramatically with fuel and raw materials costs increasing by up to 35%. So the questions will be 1) will we have the labour force/contractors available to do the work? and 2) can we finance the level of work proposed?

Our magnificent district is known for its events and sadly most of them had to be cancelled this year. Many have received Council funding in support and we will work with those organisations to seek solutions and look forward to next year. While we may be frustrated that these events don't happen perhaps now the community should be going to those people and organisations who have put in a huge effort to simply say thanks, and how can we help you for next year.

As I have said previously Government is moving at a pace which is the polite version. I have never seen such a high level of change. Changes to legislation include the delivery of water services to the four-entity model; the reform of the Resource Management Act, the reform of the Civil Defence functions; and many others.

Onto local things. Disappointingly at the end of last year somebody poisoned the commemorative trees at Koitiata. I thank the community there for their approach which was to say "okay how can we try and save some of the trees, and if not how do we replace them and move on?" In Marton many people are asking me if the industrial development in Marton is still happening? We are in the final stages of the Environment Court determination. Companies wanting to come here or to expand their existing company to employ many people are still very keen.

I am aware from the last Talk Up Taihape newsletter there was a message from the Chair, Les Clarke advising that "you may be aware of a new group in town, the Taihape Development Group, this group is not affiliated with the Taihape Community Development Trust". I am also aware of this group and while it beautifully illustrates some of the opportunities in Taihape and services provided within the community, it is being used as a platform to criticise our Chief Executive, Peter Beggs. Council and myself have full confidence and support in Peter and he has brought much needed positive change to our district. I, as always, am prepared to come and speak to any individual or group around any concerns. I also note from the Talk Up Taihape newsletter the Taihape Community Board Chair Ann Abernethy's congratulations to Sandra Spiers for a QSM awarded for Services for First Aid within the community for many years. She notes it is an award well received, as through "hands on" and tutoring many have benefited from Sandra's knowledge.

Ngā manaakitanga, Andy Watson, Mayor of Rangitikei District.

Council's Response to Omicron

On Monday 14 February it was confirmed Rangitikei District had confirmed cases of Omicron. To ensure the safety of both staff and public Council's Chief Executive Peter Beggs implemented the following changes to Council's services, effective from 8am, Tuesday 15 February.

Council Offices

The Main Council Office (46 High Street, Marton) will remain open to the public, but because many of our staff will be working remotely, there may be reduced access to some public facing services - if possible, please ring in advance before visiting our office - 0800 422 522. The office will be closed between 12pm - 1pm each day, due to reduced staffing numbers.

Council and Committee meetings

All Council and Committee meetings, normally held in Council facilities, will be held via Zoom only and live-streamed to Council's Facebook page.

Te Matapihi Bookings

If you have existing bookings at Te Matapihi our staff will work with booking holders on how best to support the event.

Further updates will be provided on our website when they are available.

Libraries and Information Centres

All Libraries and Information Centres in Bulls, Marton and Taihape will be closed to the public. Our staff will still be working in these services, and a "Click and Collect" service will be available - please email or ring the Library you would like to collect from:

Taihape - 06 388 0604 or taihapelib@rangitikei.govt.nz

Marton - 06 327 0080 or martlib@rangitikei.govt.nz

Te Matapihi-Bulls - 06 327 0083 or bullslib@rangitikei.govt.nz

If you are unable to collect items we may be able to arrange delivery, please advise staff when you are ordering your items.



Taihape Grandstand assessed as earthquake-prone but will remain open

In July 2021, a detailed seismic assessment was completed on the Taihape Grandstand which concluded that when in use, the grandstand has a New Building Standard (NBS) of 17% and needs to be strengthened.

The Grandstand remains open to the public and signs have been put up to warn the public about the danger, leaving it to users to choose whether they use the building.

Later this year, a report outlining the full costs of strengthening the building will go to Council for consideration. Following that there will be a public conversation about fundraising to cover heritage-related costs that are over and above strengthening the structure.

What does NBS mean?

Earthquake-prone buildings are given an earthquake rating, commonly referred to as a percentage of the New Building Standard (NBS). Earthquake ratings mean the degree to which the building, or part, meets the seismic performance requirements of the Building Code. Buildings that achieve less than a third of the new building standard (below 34% NBS) are considered earthquake-prone.

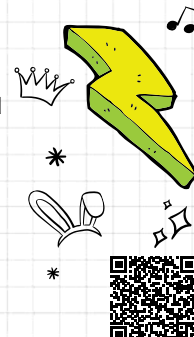
A building, or part of a building, is earthquake-prone if it is likely to collapse and cause injury or death, or damage to another property, in a moderate earthquake.

For example, if a brand-new building were built today it should be designed to achieve at least 100% NBS. A building which is 100% NBS should be designed not to collapse in a larger earthquake so that people can get out of the building safely.

Apply now for our Events Sponsorship Scheme

The Events Sponsorship Scheme is a Council fund intended to support events in our district that help to develop community and economic growth. There are three main categories of events: high profile, community, or high profile community events. This year funding for the Scheme has increased from \$25,000 to \$50,000.

To apply for this funding, groups must have their application to us by Sunday 6 March 2022. If you need more information or assistance in completing your form, please contact on Customer Experience team on 0800 422 522 or info@rangitikei.govt.nz.



Get your booster, get ready

BookMyVaccine.nz



Unite against COVID-19

We have a plan to keep people safe on our roads.

It's called Road to Zero.



roadtozero.govt.nz